



Reconstructing the Traditions of Sophia in Gnostic Literature by Deirdre J. Good

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Salles' article. Why inaccurately label figure 1 (archaeological site map) with *Saudi Arabia* and *eastern province* side-by-side, for example? There is no reason why the terminology identifying portions of the Seleucid Near East found in figure 3 could not also have been used here. Finally, while the extensive bibliography found at the end of the volume is quite valuable, it lacks references to recent studies of such important topics as the Greek chronographic tradition, which are not out of place in a bibliography of works covering the Seleucid Near East. Since Kuhrt's article, for example, raises questions regarding this important topic, references to current scholarship on Eusebius (who preserves portions of Berossus' *Babyloniaka*) would have been helpful.

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Reconstructing the Traditions of Sophia in Gnostic Literature. By DEIRDRE J. GOOD. Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series 32. Atlanta: SCHOLARS PRESS, 1987. Pp. xxi + 103. \$11.95 (paper).

Gender studies are a relatively new, rapidly ascendant subfield in research on Gnosticism. Good's book marks an important contribution in this area. Despite the volume's slim appearance, it contains a wealth of compressed information, tightly presented and argued. An introduction, four chapters (the two first are the longest), an appendix, a bibliography, and three indexes make up the book. First, Good stresses the Gnostic Sophia's relationship to the Wisdom literature, and she combats stereotypes of Sophia's "fall," hybris, and culpability—all attributes habitually associated with this figure. Good's test-cases are the Nag Hammadi Codex (= NHC) documents *Eugnostos* (*Eug*) and *Sophia Jesu Christi* (*SJC*), each of which has two versions: A (*Eug*, NHC V, 1); B. (*NHC* III, 3); C (*SJC*, NHC III, 4), and D (*BG* 8502, 3). Sifting the similarities and differences in these versions, Good uses sections of text in parallel columns and bases her conclusions on firm linguistic grounds.

Her first chapter is devoted to the Sophia figure in *Eug*, a text whose lack of tragedy on the divine level and lack of a "predictable," culpable Sophia have puzzled scholars. A major issue surfacing here is androgyny: some androgynes are balanced, while those tilting to the female side may spell trouble, and those designated male ensure that things, at least from a male point of view, remain harmonious. Each textual case of gender asymmetry or budding conflict in androgyny needs individual consideration (see, e.g., pp. 8–9). The author notes (p. 12) that in text A, the male aspect requires the consent of his/its female side in order to undertake a creative act. One will recall that in other, more "agreeably typical," Gnostic texts it is *Sophia's* lack of

consent from her male partner that leads to a (sometimes) negatively evaluated creation. Conspicuously, in A, the androgynous male cannot create alone.

Good's investigation of the calendrical system in *Eug* seems to me the most impressive and suggestive part of this chapter. Six androgynous beings (their names are Sophia-compounds!) equal the twelve months making up the 360-day year. However, "the defect of femaleness" appearing in *Eug* need not be associated with Sophia, Good argues. Rather, the defect is implicit in the lunar calendar presupposed in *Eug* (the lunar, "female" month is a concern in texts such as *I Enoch* and the *Ps.-Clementine Homilies*). The clause, "[a]nd they [the six androgynes] are all perfect and good. And in this way the defect of femaleness appeared" (B 85.8–9) conveys no contradiction between the two statements. The word-play on "firmament" (στερέωμα) and "defect" (ὀστέρημα) should be appreciated in this context.

In chapter 2, Good deals with *SJC*, treating Sophia-soteriology, competing Christology, the multiplicity of Sophias, and androgyny. *SJC's* "so that his/her glory might be revealed" (C 107.22–23) demonstrates the problem of the possessive pronoun: what to do when Sophia is undeniably male, too? Translators have often been reluctant to bring out the (I think *intended*) ambiguities in the text. Good argues that *SJC* demonstrates the possibility of a Christian myth in which Sophia was *not* portrayed as guilty. When, "fallen" or simply incarnated, Sophia is vindicated, it is because of her links with the upper realm (cf. *Lk* 7:35).

Two short chapters deal with emanations and the plurality of Sophias in *Eug*, with Sophia and Immortal Anthropos, and with the shift from androgynes to syzygies. In an appendix, the author takes on Schenke's well-worn stereotypical ideas about Sophia and androgyny in his "Nag-Hamadi Studien III." Good's book should propel renewed interest in the Biblical (and extra-Biblical) Wisdom hypostasis.

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Biblical Interpretation in the Gnostic Gospel of Truth from Nag Hammadi. By JACQUELINE A. WILLIAMS. SBL Dissertation Series, no. 79. Atlanta: SCHOLARS PRESS, 1988. Pp. 220.

This Yale dissertation, completed under the direction of Professor Bentley Layton in 1983, is almost completely taken up by a list of some seventy-three passages from the Gos. Truth and their suspected biblical (or non-biblical) derivations. The study concludes with two brief chapters, the first evaluating the author's use of texts, and the second commenting on his presuppositions and method. The introduc-